

in the next chapter. I merely mention the circumstance here to explain some events which took place in the north, and which were, more or less, directly connected with it. For example, in the month of September the course of exchange on St. Petersburg suddenly fell. All the letters which arrived in Hamburg from the capital of Russia and from Riga, attributed the fall to the election of the Prince of Ponte-Corvo as Prince Royal of Sweden. Of thirty letters which I received there was not one but described the consternation which the event had created in St. Petersburg. This consternation, however, might have been excited less by the choice of Sweden than by the fear that that choice was influenced by the French Government.¹

[ANNEX TO THE PRECEDING

CHAPTER.] THE MARRIAGE OF

MARIA LOUISA.

Cherishing for General Lauriston, formerly his *aide, de, c.* a friendship of very long standing, Napoleon commissioned him to proceed to Vienna, and to accompany the Empress to Paris as the captain of her bodyguard. With the view of honoring the memory of Marshal Latmos, Duke of Montehello, he appointed his widow to be a lady of honor to the new Empress, finding it impossible, to bestow upon her a more signal proof of his esteem, for she had not at that time any claim to entitle her to a situation which was to place her, all at once, at the head of the highest society.

He sent his sister, the Queen of Naples, as far as Braunau, with four ladies of honor to meet the Empress. We had then in Braunau the corps of Marshal Davoust, who was completing measures for evacuating Austria. This corps was placed under arms upon the arrival of the Empress, and gave her as brilliant a reception as the means of so small a town could afford. The Queen of Naples received the Empress at Braunau, where the ceremony took place of delivering up her Majesty by the officers whom her father had appointed to accompany her, as well as of the delivery of her effects; and, as soon as the Empress had clothed herself in the garments brought in the wardrobe from Paris, she passed

¹ Bernadotte himself seems not to have believed in the merits of his elevation, for, if reported rightly to Perthes, he is said, in arguing against the existence of a God, to have urged, "How can you contend for the being of a God? If there were one, should I be here in Lubeck?" (*Memoirs of Perthes*, vol. i. p. 151).